

Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police Blotter: June 20-26

Reminder for the week: Observe safety precautions when towing water skiers

DOVER – To achieve public compliance through education and enforcement actions that help conserve Delaware's fish and wildlife resources and ensure safe boating and public safety, DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police officers between June 20-26 made 1,696 contacts with anglers, boaters and the general public, including 169 vessel boardings for boating safety and fishing regulation compliance checks. Officers responded to 43 complaints and issued 30 citations, one of which was related to the C&D Canal Conservation Area and associated recreational trail, where there is an increased Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police presence.

An incident of note:

- On June 25, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police cited Gerard M. Centofanti, 68, of Reading, Pa., Todd Sheridan, 51, of Thomasville, Pa., John Krinex, 70, of Ellenton, Fla., and Bradley Sheridan, 73, of Spring Grove, Pa., for one count each of recreational crab pot tampering on Vines Creek in Indian River Bay. The four men were fined \$107 each, including court costs.

Citations issued by category, with the number of charges in parentheses, included:

Wildlife Conservation: Trespassing after hours on a state wildlife area (1)*, and operating an unregistered motor vehicle on a state wildlife area (1).

Fisheries Conservation: *Recreational:* Unlicensed fishing (6), recreational crab pot tampering (4), use of recreational crab pots without required turtle excluder (1), possession of undersized blue crabs (5), and possession of undersized summer flounder (2).

Boating and Boating Safety: Operating a vessel with insufficient number of lifejackets (2), no lifejackets on water skiers (2), failure to observe slow-no-wake zone (3), operating an unregistered vessel (1), no fire extinguisher (1), and no boating education certificate (1).

* Citation issued at the C&D Canal Conservation Area.

Are you AWARE?

DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police remind boaters of some important safety regulations when towing water skiers.

"Water skiing is a three-person sport – the water skier, the boat operator and the observer," said Sgt. John McDerby, Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police boating safety coordinator. "Under Delaware law, any vessel towing a water skier must have a person aboard other than the operator to act as the observer. To ensure the skier's safety, the observer faces backwards, watches the skier and alerts the boat operator of any hand signals from the skier or if the skier goes down."

Other safety requirements for water skiing:

- Recreational water skiers must wear lifejackets.
- A water skiing tow line cannot exceed 75 feet in length.
- Observe all "Slow-No Wake" areas.
- Avoid traveling at unsafe speeds, including congested areas.
- If water skiing or tubing behind a personal watercraft (PWC), the PWC must have the capacity to legally carry the operator, observer and the person being towed.

- Observe marked “No Water Skiing” areas, which include all marked swimming areas, Assawoman Canal, Indian River Inlet, Roosevelt Inlet, Whites Creek, a portion of the channel through Masseys Landing and portions of the Rehoboth-Lewes Canal.
- Maintain a safe and reasonable distance from shipping lanes, other vessels, persons and property.
- Water skiing is prohibited at night between sunset and sunrise, and within 100 feet of persons in the water, piers, docks, floats, wharfs, vessels anchored or adrift and private or public boat launch ramps.

For more information, please visit [Delaware Boating Safety](#).

DNREC’s Division of Fish & Wildlife recognizes and thanks the majority of anglers, hunters and boaters who comply with and support Delaware’s fishing, hunting and boating laws and regulations. Citizens are encouraged to report fish, wildlife and boating violations to the Delaware Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police by calling 302-739-4580. Wildlife violations may also be reported anonymously to Operation Game Theft by calling 800-292-3030 or online at <http://de.gov/ogt>.

Contact: Sgt. John McDerby, DNREC Division of Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police, 302-739-9913 or 302-354-1386, or Joanna Wilson, DNREC Public Affairs, 302-739-9902

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